



Off Site Educational Visits Policy

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Off-Site Visits Policy

This policy adheres to DfE guidance regarding Health and Safety on Educational Visits November 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

1.1 Introduction

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences, which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our pupils' learning experiences. Off-site activities, outside of school hours may also be used as an effective method of rewarding achievement.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day although some may extend to evenings, weekends and residential visits.

All visits will comply with the Health & Safety advice provided by the Department for Education and Outdoor Education Advisor Panel guidance.

Aims

2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone
- promote the independence of our pupils as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments
- encourage active citizenship at both a local and global level

Curriculum Links

3.1 For each subject in the curriculum there are opportunities for off site visits for example:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens and industry sites where Science plays an active role
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment, raising achievement visits
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, museums
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails, international visits to assist case studies
- Art and Design – art gallery visits, use of the locality, visits to places linked closely with the work of an artist
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches, opportunities to learn a new sport not accessible within the school premises
- Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local schools' orchestra, concerts for parents / carer to hear, musical theatre visits
- Design and Technology – visits to local factories, design centres and agricultural shows
- ICT – its use in local shops / libraries / secondary schools etc., visits to industry where applicable
- RE – visits to centres of worship, visits by clergy, exploration of religion in other countries
- PSHE and Citizenship – visits to a fire station or college and university visits, visits by local police officers and health workers
- MFL – visits to partner schools abroad and significant cultural events and exhibitions in target language countries

4. 1 Residential Activities

Residential visits enable pupils to explore curriculum subjects on a much deeper level and give the opportunity to learn in a more diverse manner. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

How visits may be planned and approved

The school will appoint a named Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), who will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

The Educational Visits Coordinator will:

- Check that staff leading visits have the required qualifications to lead specific activities
- Ensure that risk assessments are completed by competent trained staff

- Check visit plans and risk assessments
- Organise related staff training
- Identify and record qualifications, training, development, induction and apprenticeship arrangements for all Group Leaders
- Verify that all private car drivers, have had satisfactory Disclosure Barring Services Checks and hold adequate vehicle insurance
- Ensure that regular volunteers have had satisfactory Disclosure Barring Services Checks carried out. Volunteers used for one off activities, who are not left alone at any time (out of sight / ear shot of a member of staff) to supervise pupils, do not necessarily need Disclosure Barring Services Checks completing. The Head of School's discretion under these circumstances should be used
- Ensure that adults accompanying residential visits all have satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained
- Support the Head of School and Governing Body in their decisions on approval
- Keep records of visits, and ensure the generic risk assessments for different types of visits are updated and available on the school system

The Head of School will appoint a group leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school with an appropriate level of experience, training and qualifications. The Head of School or EVC must have approved the visit before any letters are sent to parents / carers or any commitments are made on behalf of the school.

Group Leaders and staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must follow the procedures adopted by the school for the managing and approving of educational visits.

5.1 Group Leaders Will:

- Ensure all off site activities take place in accordance with the School's procedures
- Ensure sufficient staff and helpers of the right experience are DBS checked and briefed throughout the visit
- Conduct risk assessments and ensure management to reduce risks including site specific, generic and dynamic risk assessments are undertaken and recorded
- Ensure providers are appropriately checked, and insurance and financial support procedures are followed when being selected
- Ensure a named person, emergency procedures and systems for recording and sharing information on accidents and near misses are in place before briefing pupils and parents / carers
- Will, where possible, undertake exploratory visits or seek references from other schools if using new venues

- Ensure appropriate transport arrangements are in place i.e. reputable coach company, driver insurance, following specific School and legal requirements
- Ensure any accidents / incidents are reported
- Feedback any learning points from visits to the EVC

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Head of School / EVC before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. To allow an informed decision to be made, the Group Leader should provide a comprehensive visit plan.

For all off-site visits, the EVC will authorise initially with the Head of School.

It is our policy that all pupils should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a pupil with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that they are included. We may seek guidance from parents / carers to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a pupil with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Staff and other adults assigned to participate in an Educational Visit should be appropriately briefed on their responsibilities prior to the visit-taking place.

The EVC and Group Leader must ensure that staff and adults have received appropriate training and have been informed of their responsibilities including details of the plan visit, risk assessment and the actions to take in event of an emergency.

Staff and other adults must ensure they make themselves familiar with the visit plans, risk assessments and any other health and safety arrangements prior to the commencement of the visit. They must also ensure that they report any issues of concern to the Group Leader immediately.

- Staff and other adults supporting EVs are required to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner at all times and ensure they observe standards of behaviour consistent with school policy and the Code of Conduct
- During all visits, including overnight stays, staff and adults remain responsible for pupils at all times and should have regard to their fitness to undertake their duties at any time of the day or night. Therefore, staff and adults should give careful consideration to participating in activities which may compromise their ability to undertake their duties, including the consumption of alcohol, having regard to the adult pupil ratio
- Parental Permission / Indemnity Forms

Longfield Academy Indemnity Forms are completed when pupils join the school. All residential visits require further written parental permission and the Group Leader must ensure that additional Indemnity Form and medical information is completed and returned.

6.1 Risk Assessment

Competent staff (usually the Group Leader) must carry out a comprehensive risk assessment, before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks that might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the Group Leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- Alternative arrangements or “Plan B” if the risks change and activities cannot be completed
- Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments should be considered to ascertain if they are of an appropriate standard and meet the expectations of Longfield Academy
- It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios

- 1 adult to 10/15 pupils in Years 7 to 11 dependant on the level of risk

Most trips will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases. Higher levels of supervision may be required or determined by the risk assessment, National Governing Body guidelines or at the request of the provider.

Residential visits where the group includes both male and female pupils must be accompanied by both male and female members of staff.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue and must include provision for:

- Appropriate level of supervision
- The required use of seat belts
- Proper vetting of the driver
- Proper insurance for the driver
- Details of first aid and emergency procedures
- Breakdown procedures

The Group Leader will double-check that all regular volunteers helping to supervise the trip have been subject to satisfactory Disclosure Barring Services Checks. Those volunteers used for one off activities, who are not left alone at any time (out of sight / ear shot of a member of staff) to supervise pupils, do not necessarily need Disclosure Barring Services Checks completing. The Head of School's discretion under these circumstances should be used.

For all visits the general risk assessment and transport risk assessment will be required.

Should any assessment fall into the category of High Risk or above, then the trip must not take place, unless the risks can be further reduced. Advice will be sought from the Educational Visits Coordinator on how to reduce the risks further.

All risk assessments will be uploaded onto the school system by the Group Leader.

It is important that the risk assessment is communicated and understood by everyone involved in the trip (staff, volunteers, pupils and parents / carers) before it takes place. This includes risks, control measures, emergency arrangements and contingency plans.

Dynamic risk assessments may be required during the visit if changes occur e.g. weather, illness or an unforeseen hazard.

On completion of the visit, the risk assessment must be reviewed and any learning points and recommendations for improved control measures documented and communicated to relevant staff.

Any accidents that occur to employees, volunteers or pupils during the visit must be investigated and recorded following normal School Accident Reporting procedures.

7.1 Transport

When hiring coaches and minibuses, it is our policy only to use reputable companies with vehicles fitted with appropriate child restraints (seat belts), and to insist that all those participating in the visit wear them.

The school's minibus will be operated following the School's policy, with the Head of School and Governing Body responsible for the management and use of vehicle. The Driver is responsible for the vehicle during a journey and must observe all legal requirements.

Where private cars are used for transport, the Head of School or EVC is responsible for ensuring:

- Suitability of driver
- Parent / carer written agreement
- Appropriate licence, insurance, roadworthy and child restraints for vehicle
- Double-checking that each driver has been subject to Disclosure Barring Service Checks

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party and appropriate child restraints will be used, whether travelling by car, minibus or coach.

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- Transport
- Entrance fees
- Insurance
- Provision of any special resources or equipment
- Costs related to adult helpers
- Any refreshments the school has opted to pay for

The school makes a charge to parents / carers. The charge covers the expenses of the journey only; we do not make any profit from this.

8.1 Communication with Parents / Carers

The parents / carers of pupils taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit to make an informed decision.

Parents / carers must give their written permission, medical and contact details, before a pupil can be involved in any off-site activities. This may take the form of the indemnity form completed when a pupil joined the school.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of residential visits). This must be made clear to parents / carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No pupil should be automatically excluded from an activity because of the inability of the parent / carer to make a contribution. Parents / carers will be informed of the opportunity to apply for financial assistance on a means tested basis. Application forms for the Disadvantaged Subsidy Grant are available from Reception.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head of School to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Where appropriate for residential, foreign or adventure activity visits, meetings with parents / carers will be arranged.

Expectations of behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents / carers. This will include the need to meet the cost and make arrangements for collecting pupils in certain circumstances.

9.1 Pupils

Pupils should be briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all visits. Ongoing briefings are an important part of learning and safety.

Where possible pupils should be involved with planning, developing codes of conduct, assessing / managing risk and evaluating their own attitude, behaviour, development and learning.

If a pupil is involved in a serious behaviour incident, the Head of School or EVC may decide that the pupil may not be allowed to take part in offsite educational visits. This sanction may also be applied to pupils who exhibit persistent disruptive behaviour.

10.1 Further Health and Safety Considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the Group Leader, of the emergency procedures that will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a group leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, pupils and adults, travelling with the group, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the group, and especially the pupils, is of paramount importance. During the activity the Group Leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that pupils are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual pupil is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the Group Leader should discuss with the Head of School the possibility of excluding that pupil from the activity.

11.1 Visit Plan

The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- Risk assessment
- Report on preliminary visit
- Applications for approval of visit
- General information
- Names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit
- Travel schedule
- Accommodation plan (if applicable)
- Full plan of activities
- Contingency plan details
- Fire precautions and evacuation procedures
- Intended arrangements for supervision
- Insurance arrangements for all members of the group
- Emergency contacts and procedures
- General communications information
- Guidance for Group Leaders
- Guidance for the emergency contact and Head of School
- Medical questionnaire returns
- First-aid
- Accident report forms

12.1 Business Continuity and Emergency Planning

In the event of emergency, the schools Business Continuity Plan will apply.

13.1 Evaluation of Visits

In order to ensure that visits represent the best use of time and resources, and that the visit met the learning outcomes that were intended, it is important that visits should be

evaluated to ensure any lessons are learnt and that these lessons are applied to further visits.

14.1 Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years or before if necessary.

Annex 1

This information has been added to the Offsite Educational Visits Policy following the government guidance issued to schools on 02 July 2020.

For access to full and up to date guidance please visit
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>)

DfE guidance remains that schools should not take pupils on overnight trips and should take them on day trips only in certain circumstances. This guidance will also remain under review but as at 02 July 2020 reads as follows:

Educational visits

The department continues to advise against domestic (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage see [coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings](#). In the autumn term, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits. These trips should include any trips for pupils with SEND connected with their preparation for adulthood (for example, workplace visits, travel training etc.). This should be done in line with protective measures, such as keeping children within their consistent group, and the coronavirus (COVID-19) secure measures in place at the destination. Schools should also make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support delivery of the curriculum. As normal, schools should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they can be done safely. As part of this risk assessment, schools will need to consider what control measures need to be used and ensure they are aware of wider advice on visiting indoor and outdoor venues. Schools should consult the [health and safety guidance on educational visits](#) when considering visits.

There will be no residential educational visits either domestic or overseas planned for the academic year 2020 – 2021. Any day visits will be planned in conjunction with the Educational Visits Co-Coordinator to ensure that full and thorough risk assessments are in place and the health and safety guidance on educational visits is adhered to.